

# The Echo

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## Letter From the President

Push and pray. I recently heard author Jeannette Walls (The Glass Castle) speak in Iowa City. Ms. Walls was describing her grandmother who sometimes drove a small school bus. If the bus became stuck or just needed help up a hill, her grandmother would have her students get out and recite prayers as they pushed the bus. 'Push and pray' was her grandmother's shouted encouragement to her students.

Push and pray - I like the combination of action and faith. The Ecumenical Center is continuing its work on several programs. Helping Hands Ministry is again helping to administer first month's rent programs designed to help people in need get into stable housing situations. The rent monies are provided by Linn County and Marion. Helping Hands Ministry, through your donations to the Ecumenical Center, provides the administrative support to make the program work. The first month's rent program also helps stretch Helping Hands dollars when providing financial aid for other needs.



### Zero Poverty Summit 2010

10/10/10 @ 1:10 pm  
 Hope United Church of Christ; 150 9th Avenue; Hiawatha, IA 52233

### Speakers from:

- Matthew 25 Ministry Hub
- Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program
- Willis Dady Shelter STRAP
- ICAN & Horizons' Program
- Helping Hands Ministry
- Director as Moderator
- (See website for more info)

CompuPlace is expanding the computer hardware and software available to individuals with disabilities. Director Robin Brunner continues to expand the accessibility of the computer programs available to CompuPlace users.

New this fall, the ECC is working with Marvalee Vuichard to expand community awareness for the Center's programs. Some of you may have talked with Marvalee and I hope more of you will the opportunity to do so in the near future.

Push and pray. There is a great need in our community for action and faith. Thank you all for your support of the Ecumenical Community Center. Collectively our action and faith will move us down the road as we address the challenges our community faces.

Jim Kennedy, ECC President

# Helping Hands Ministry

## Helping Hands Ministry

601 Second Avenue SE #2  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401-1305  
Phone: (319)-366-2651  
Email: [helpinghands@ecc-cr.net](mailto:helpinghands@ecc-cr.net)

Lois Rude, HHM Director  
Barb Kane, HHM Staff Associate



### **CITY OF MARION WINSLOW ROAD TAX INCREMENT FINANCE (TIF) DISTRICT FUND: JANUARY 2008—AUGUST 2010 \$36,260 FIRST MONTH RENT**

Thanks to the City of Marion, **91 households representing 214 persons** were assisted with first month rent. To qualify, the household had to provide proof of income for the past three months falling within 130% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines, be able to pay their own rent deposit and show an ability to pay ongoing rent and basic living expenses. Households were required to exhaust any help from Linn County. Landlords had to be willing to accept first month rent from Helping Hands. The maximum payable rent was \$600. Of the 91 households, 55 were families and 36 were individuals. Telephone interviews 6 and 12 months after assistance show the households in stabilized housing. **It is with this additional type of community support that Helping Hands Ministry**

During the first 8 months of 2010, HHM has served **481 households representing 1,010 persons!** A total of 24 churches have donated \$52,054 for HHM serves of which \$48,065 has been distributed during this 8 month period. The majority of requests are for rent or rent deposit and utility/deposit (electricity primarily). Most of the households are eligible for heating assistance through HACAP's energy assistance program. HHM does not duplicate already existing program assistance.

HHM has just been notified that it has been approved for another \$70,000 grant from the Housing Fund for Linn County (HFfLC). This award will be used to help Linn County residents with limited income to move into a place by paying either the first month's rent or the deposit, maintain a place by paying one month's rent to avoid eviction, or by paying an old utility bill or utility deposit to get utilities in their name at the new place. With the first \$35,000 HFfLC grant this year, 83 households representing 202 persons were assisted. The new grant should serve 150-160 households in 2011. We thank you for your continued support and prayers.

*Lois Ann Rude, HHM Director*



**Kiersten Onanga** is a Senior at **Mt. Mercy University** and is doing her **Social Work internship** at HHM. She plans on pursuing a Master's Degree. Her passion is helping families. HHM is pleased to have Kiersten 24 hours a week for a total of 312 hours during the Fall semester.

On a personal note, she is married with one child and another due in February.

In addition to becoming fully trained on the Helping Hands Ministry Program, Kiersten will also be involved in small groups for the Zero Poverty Project's "Getting Ahead" program. Stop by and introduce yourself. Welcome, Kiersten!



## CompuPlace

601 Second Avenue SE #3  
 Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401-1305  
 Phone: (319)-362-4284  
 Email: [compuplace@ecc-cr.net](mailto:compuplace@ecc-cr.net)

Robin Switzer Brunner, Director

### **COMPUPLACE: A specialized Learning Lab for People with Intellectual Disabilities or Assistive Technology needs.**

Since the last issue of the ECHO, we have been upgrading our lab with newer XP machines from the REACT Center, and with wonderful new integrated TouchScreens and some new software purchased through a grant from the Rockwell Collins Employee United Fund. Many thanks to Rockwell Collins and its commitment to our community!

Averages for the first seven months of 2010 look like 2009. Each month we are serving 47 clients, providing 157 client-hours of service with 163 paid staff hours. In addition to maintaining this level of service, we have developed exciting new teaching tools to be used by our clients both here and in their own homes. Through the gracious and enthusiastic assistance of REACT volunteer Bryon Wiscons, we have a Question and Answer game, a Spelling game with an on-screen QWERTY keyboard, and most recently, a Matching game. These games, pictured below, can be personalized with the subject matter most salient to our individual clients, and with the words and pictures most relevant to them as they go about their daily lives. Since games made for adults with disabilities are often expensive and are not always suited to an individuals' skills and / or interests, these games comprise a series of projects with great potential.



With the Question and Answer game, we work on reading both isolated words and words in a sentence. It can also be a logic task. For example, one should look for a number in answer to “How many...?” The Spelling game can help a person who does not speak to communicate needs and wishes more precisely. The Matching game, can allow “peeking” and clients can work on mouse skills as well as exercise memory.

**We need volunteers to take pictures, size digital images, and write trivia questions!**

# ECC News

## THANKS for 2010 support\* from:

St Pius X Catholic	First Christian
First Baptist Marion	First Lutheran
Immaculate Conception Catholic	Gloria Dei Lutheran
St Matthew's	Our Savior's Lutheran
St Joseph's—Marion	Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
St Ludmila Catholic	Buffalo U/Methodist
First Congregational	Living Water U/Methodist
St Stephens Lutheran	Prairie Chapel U/Methodist
Oakland Church of the Nazarene	Salem U/Methodist
Echo Hill Presbyterian Deacons	St. Paul's U/Methodist
Echo Hill Presbyterian	People's Church Unitarian
First Presbyterian, C.R.	Mission of Hope
Westminster Presbyterian	Church Women United
	Christ Episcopal

\*It is recognized that some churches choose to send donations to HHM & ECC on a quarterly basis. This report merely shows deposits for the first eight months of 2010.

Check out our website:

[www.ecc-cr.net](http://www.ecc-cr.net)

We appreciate

constructive feedback.

Please contact us with any suggestions.

**ECC Director of Development**



**Marvalee Vuichard** is the new ECC Director of Development. She will be meeting with the staff of CompuPlace and Helping Hands Ministry to review needs and prepare grant information. It is her intention to visit with local churches and interested persons about their involvement and commitment to the ECC. Marvalee can be reached at (319) 377-9364 or [vuichard9364@msn.com](mailto:vuichard9364@msn.com)

## **Margaret Bock Housing Update**

### **"A Home on Third"**

1021 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

Margaret Bock Housing (MBH) continues to serve low income single adults with affordable housing. It is currently at full capacity with a waiting list for acceptance. Thirty-four (34) single rooms are available to be occupied. Six of the rooms have an adjoining bathroom whereas the remaining 28 share one of several community bathrooms. Rent varies according to the size of the room from \$235 to \$255 per month including utilities and cleaning of all common areas.

The minimum requirements for acceptance are: must be single, have a source of income, pay a \$130 security deposit, pay one month rent in advance and agree to a "criminal check". Rent applications may be picked up at the Helping Hands Ministry office located at 601 Second Avenue SE #2.

**Wish list:** twin sheets & pillows



# TOUR de HOPE

Join us for a free progressive open house featuring moving stories, delicious food, and fun door prizes!

**Saturday, September 25 9am -2pm**

**AID TO WOMEN**, 701 Center Point Rd NE, a pregnancy resource center, empowers women to choose life through Christ-centered education, counseling, and support.

**EQUIPPING YOUTH**, 118 3rd Ave SE, #431, promotes character education through our Powerful Choices abstinence program for youth and their families.

**HELPING HANDS MINISTRY**, 601 2nd Ave SE #2, at the Ecumenical Community Center, provides referral services and financial assistance to Linn County residents.

**HIS HANDS FREE MEDICAL CLINIC**, 1043 3rd Ave SE, provides for the physical and spiritual needs of the uninsured through quality and dignified healthcare.

**HOUSE OF HOPE**, 1744 2nd Ave SE, empowers, encourages, and equips women to live well through mentoring, housing, classes, and speaking events.

**MISSION OF HOPE**, 1537 1st Ave SE, serves the formerly incarcerated and others in need by providing food, clothes, shelter, worship services, and Bible studies.

**Begin Anywhere, Be Inspired Everywhere!**

[www.aidtowomenministry.com/tourdehope](http://www.aidtowomenministry.com/tourdehope)

319-862-2636 to pre-register

## ECC Board of Directors

Jim Kennedy, President, First Lutheran

Charles Scott, Vice President, Salem United Methodist

Peter Riley, Treasurer, At-Large

Lois Nosek, Secretary, Mound View Neighborhood Association

Gary Novak, Salem United Methodist

J.D. Combellick, Peoples Unitarian Universalist

Dale Crosier, At-Large

Jim Federer, At-Large

Henry Hernandez, Immaculate Conception Catholic

Ed Holstrom, St. Paul's United Methodist

David Jiruska, Westminster Presbyterian

Vacancy\*, Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association

Scott Olson, At-Large

Jean Oxley, First Congregational

Carolyn Schmidt, Echo Hill Presbyterian

Vacancy\*, At-Large

John vonLackum, First Presbyterian-CR

Mary Ann Stewart, Lovely Lane United Methodist

Claudia Whitney = Christ Episcopal Church

\*As of 07/01/10



## The Ecumenical Community Center

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Phone: (319)-366-2651

On the Web: [www.ecc-cr.net](http://www.ecc-cr.net)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage PAID  
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## Return Service Requested

### HHM Wish List

#### For distribution to clients:

- Small bottles/boxes of laundry soap
- Quarters for laundry needs
- 4-roll packages toilet paper
- Razors/Shaving Cream
- Feminine hygiene products
- Hy-Vee gift cards (special dietary needs)

#### For office:

- Postage Stamps
- Colored 8-1/2 x 11 copier paper
- White 8-1/2 x 11 copier paper
- Letter size/3-tab manila file folders
- Gift cards to purchase ink cartridges
- Financial donations for general support
- Volunteers (minimum 2 hours/week)

### CompuPlace Wish List

- Office-type chairs that can be easily cleaned
- Internet Hubs
- USB hubs (maybe 4 port?)
- A-2 (invitation sized) envelopes for clients' quarter-fold greeting cards
- White Card or Cover stock (greeting cards)
- \$ for software designed for adults with disabilities. These can be \$60–\$150 per disc.
- \$350 for one more MagicTouch touch screen
- \$ to attend October 2011 conference in MN
- \$ for general operational support
- Scratch paper (clean, blank on one side)
- One or a few lightweight portable file boxes
- Empty CD cases, clear in front is best
- A volunteer to take photos & use them to make learning materials using PowerPoint